

REMARKS

Claims 23-52 are pending in this patent application. By this amendment, claims 23, 29, 31, 32, 34, 37, 40, 42, 43, 46, 48, 49, and 50 have been amended. Reconsideration of this patent application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 29-33, 37, 42-44, and 48-51 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Such rewriting has been done. As a result, each of claims 29-33, 37, 42-44, and 48-51 is believed to be in proper form for allowance.

Claims 40 and 41 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Such rewriting has been done. As a result, each of claims 40 and 41 is believed to be in proper form for allowance.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejection

Claims 40 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 due to a minor antecedent basis inaccuracy. Applicant has amended claim 40 to correct such inaccuracy. Thus, claims 40 and 41 are believed to be in proper form for allowance.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 23-26, 27, 28, 34-36, 38, 39, 45-47, and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Galan Inchaurre (U.S. Patent No. 4,591,286). Claims 23, 34, and 46 have been amended to more clearly define the invention. Reconsideration of claims 23-26, 27, 28, 34-36, 38, 39, 45-47, and 52, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Amended Claim 23

Amended Claim 23

Claim 23, as amended, recites the following limitations:

a bracket having (i) a first end portion configured to be attached to said sloped surface, said first end portion defining a first opening, and (ii) a second end portion defining a socket surface, said socket surface defining a second opening; ...

wherein, when said first end portion of said bracket is attached to said sloped surface and said outer surface of said body is received by said socket surface, gravity forces said outer surface of said body into contact with said socket surface so that said retainer is maintained within said bracket.

Galan Inchaurre does not disclose these limitations. This can be plainly seen in Fig. 3 of Galan Inchaurre. In particular, Galan Inchaurre's base piece 2 (equated with the claimed "bracket") does not possess a first end portion configured to be attached to a sloped ceiling surface. Moreover, even if Galan Inchaurre's spacial structure was misused to somehow be connected to a sloped ceiling surface, the spacial structure would clearly not possess the following claimed characteristics: *when the first end portion of the base piece 2 (equated with claimed "bracket") is attached to a sloped ceiling surface and the outer surface of the body of the upper base piece 1 (equated with the claimed*

“retainer”) is received by the socket surface, gravity forces the outer surface of the body into contact with the socket surface so that the upper base piece 1 is maintained within the base piece 2. It is axiomatic that anticipation of a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is proper only if the prior art reference discloses each and every element of the claim. Since Galan Inchaurre does not disclose each and every element of Applicant’s amended claim 23, Galan Inchaurre does not anticipate Applicant’s amended claim 23.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Claims 24-28

Each of claims 24-28 depends directly or indirectly from amended claim 23. As a result, each of claims 24-28 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 23.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Amended Claim 34

The discussion relating to the patentability of amended claim 23 is relevant to the patentability of amended claim 34. Thus, amended claim 34 is believed to be allowable.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Claims 35-36, 38-39, and 45

Each of claims 35-36, 38-39, and 45 depends directly or indirectly from amended claim 34. As a result, each of claims 35-36, 38-39, and 45 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 34.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Amended Claim 46

The discussion relating to the patentability of amended claim 23 is relevant to the patentability of amended claim 46. Thus, amended claim 46 is believed to be allowable.

Discussion Regarding Patentability of Claims 47 and 52

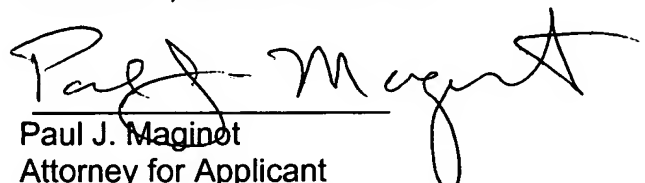
Each of claims 47 and 52 depends directly from amended claim 46. As a result, each of claims 47 and 52 is allowable for, at least, the reasons hereinbefore discussed with regard to amended claim 46.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Action to that end is hereby solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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